COOPERS HILL.

Written in the yeare. 1640.

Now Printed from a perfect Copy; And a Corrected Impression.

By JOHN DENHAM *Esq;*

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YALE

Coopers Hill.

IF there be Poets, which did never dreame
Upon Parnaſſus, nor did taſt the ſtreame
Of Helicon, we juſtly may ſuppoſe,
Thoſe made not Poets, but the Poets thoſe.
And as Courts make not Kings, but Kings the Court,
So where the Muſes and their traine reſort,
Parnaſſus ſtands; if I can be to thee
A Poet, thou Parnaſſus art to me.
Nor wonder, if (advantag'd in my flight,
By taking wing from thy auſpicious height)
Through untrac't waies and ayrie paths I flye,
More boundleſſe in my Fancy then my eye:
My eye, which ſwift as thought contracts the ſpace
That lyes between, and firſt ſalutes the place
Crown'd with that ſacred pile, ſo vaſt, ſo high,
That whether 'tis a part of Earth, or sky,

Uncertaine ſeemes, and may be thought a proud
Aſpiring mountain, or a falling cloud,
Paules, the late theme of ſuch a Muſe whoſe flight
Has bravely reach't and ſoar'd above thy height:
Now ſhalt thou ſtand, though ſword, or time, or fire,
Or zeale more fierce then they, thy fall conſpire,
Secure, whilſt thee the beſt of Poets ſings,
Preſerv'd from ruine by the beſt of Kings.
Vnder his proud ſurvay the Citty lyes,
And like a miſt beneath a hill doth riſe;
Whoſe ſtate and wealth, the buſines and the crowd,
Seems at this diſtance but a darker cloud:
And is to him, who rightly things eſteems,
No other in effect then what it ſeems:
Where with like haſt, though ſeveral waies, they run,
Some to undo, and ſome to be undone;
While luxury, and wealth, like war and peace,
Are each the others ruine, and increaſe.
As Rivers loſt in Seas ſome ſecret veine
Thence reconveighs, there to be loſt again.

Oh

Oh happineſſe of ſweet retir'd content!
To be at once ſecure, and innocent.
Windſor the next (where *Mars* with *Venus* dwells, *Windſor.*
Beauty with ſtrength) above the valley ſwells
Into my eye, and doth it ſelf preſent
With ſuch an eaſie and unforc't aſcent,
That no ſtupendious precipice denyes
Acceſſe, no horror turnes away our eyes:
But ſuch a Riſe, as doth at once invite
A pleaſure, and a reverence from the ſight.
Thy mighty Maſters Embleme, in whoſe face
Sate meekneſſe, heightned with Majeſtick Grace.
Such ſeems thy gentle height, made onely proud
To be the baſis of that pompous load,
Then which, a Nobler weight no Mountain Bears,
But *Atlas* only that ſupports the Sphears.
When Natures hand this ground did thus advance,
'Twas guided by a wiſer power then Chance;
Mark't out for ſuch a uſe, as if 'twere meant
T' invite the builder, and his choice prevent.

Nor can we call it choice, when what we chuſe,
Folly, or blindnes only could refuſe.
A Crown of ſuch Majeſtick towrs doth Grace
The Gods great Mother, when her heavenly race
Doe homage to her, yet ſhe cannot boaſt
Amongſt that numerous, and Celeſtiall hoaſt,
More *Hero*'s than can *VVindſor*, nor doth Fames
Immortall booke record more noble names.
Not to look back ſo far, to whom this Ile
Owes the firſt Glory of ſo brave a pile,
Whether to *Cæſar*, *Albanact*, or *Brute*,
The Britiſh *Arthur*, or the Daniſh *Knute*,
(Though this of old no leſſe conteſt did move,
Then when for *Homers* birth ſeven Cities ſtrove)
(Like him in birth, thou ſhould'ſt be like in Fame,
As thine his fate, if mine had been his Flame)
But whoſoere it was, Nature deſign'd
Firſt a brave place, and then as brave a minde.
Not to recount thoſe ſeverall Kings, to whom
It gave a Cradle, or to whom a Tombe,

But thee (great *Edward*) and thy greater ſonne, *Edward the 3. and the black Prince.*
(The lillies which his Father wore, he wonne)
And thy *Bellona*, who the Conſort came *Queene Philip.*
Not onely to thy bed, but to thy Fame,
She to thy Triumph led one Captive King,
And brought that ſonne, which did the ſecond bring. *The Kings of France & Scotland.*
Then didſt thou found that Order (whither love,
Or victory thy Royall thoughts did move)
Each was a noble cauſe, and nothing leſſe,
Then the deſigne, has been the great ſucceſſe:
Which forraigne Kings, and Emperors eſteeme
The ſecond Honour to their Diadem.
Had thy great deſtiny but given thee skill,
To know as well, as power to act her will,
That from thoſe Kings, who then thy captives were,
In after-times ſhould ſpring a Royall paire,
Who ſhould poſſeſſe all that thy mighty power,
Or thy deſires more mighty, did devoure;
To whom their better Fate reſerves what ere
The Victor hopes for, or the Vanquiſht feare;

That

That blood, which thou and thy great Grandsire shed,
And all that since these sister Nations bled,
Had bin unspilt, had happy *Edward* known
That all the blood he spilt, had been his own.
When he that Patron chose, in whom are joyn'd
Souldier and Martyr, and his arms confin'd
Within the Azure Circle, he did seem
But to foretel, and prophecie of him,
Who to his Realms that Azure round hath joyn'd,
Which Nature for their bound at first design'd.
That bound, which to the Worlds extreamest ends,
Endlesse it selfe, its liquid arms extends;
He, who not needs that Embleme which we paint,
But is himself the Souldier and the Saint.
Here should my wonder dwell, and here my praise,
But my fixt thoughts my wandring eye betrays,
Viewing a neighboring hill, whose top of late
A Chappel crown'd, till in the Common Fate,
The adjoyning Abby fell: (may no such storme
Fall on our times, where ruine must reform.)

Tell

Tell me (my Muſe) what monſtrous dire Offence,
What crime could any Chriſtian King incenſe
To ſuch a rage? was't Luxury? or luſt?
Was he ſo temperate, ſo chaſt, ſo juſt? (more:
Were theſe their crimes? they were his own much
But wealth is Crime enough to him that's poor,
Who having ſpent the Treaſures of his Crown,
Condemns their Luxury to feed his own.
And yet this Act, to varniſh o'er the ſhame
Of ſacriledge, muſt bear devotions name.
No Crime ſo bold, but would be underſtood
A reall, or at leaſt a ſeeming good.
Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the Name,
And free from Conſcience, is a ſlave to Fame.
Thus he the Church at once protects, and ſpoyles:
But Princes ſwords are ſharper then their ſtyles.
And thus to th' ages paſt he makes amends,
Their Charity deſtroyes, their Faith defends.
Then did Religion in a lazie Cell,
In empty, airie contemplations dwell;

And

And like the block, unmoved lay : but ours,
As much too active, like the ſtorke devours.
Is there no temperate Region can be knowne,
Betwixt their Frigid, and our Torrid Zone?
Could we not wake from that Lethargicke Dreame,
But to be reſtleſſe in a worſe extreame?
And for that Lethargy was there no cure,
But to be caſt into a Calenture?
Can knowledge have no bound, but muſt advance
So farre, to make us wiſh for ignorance?
And rather in the darke to grope our way,
Then led by a falſe guide to erre by day?
Who ſees theſe diſmall heaps, but would demand,
What barbarous Jnvader ſackt the land?
But when he heares, no Goth, no Turk did bring
This deſolation, but a Chriſtian King;
When nothing, but the Name of Zeale, appeares
'Twixt our beſt actions and the worſt of theirs,
What does he think our Sacriledge would ſpare,
When ſuch th'effects of our devotions are?

Parting

Parting from thence 'twixt anger, ſhame, and feare,
Thoſe for what's paſt, and this for what's too neare:
My eye deſcending from the Hill, ſurvaies
Where *Thames* amongſt the wanton vallies ſtrayes,
Thames, the moſt lov'd of all the Oceans ſonnes, *Thames.*
By his old Sire, to his imbraces runnes,
Haſting to pay his tribute to the Sea,
Like mortall life to meet Eternity.
Though with thoſe ſtreames he no reſemblance hold,
Whoſe foame is Amber, and their Gravell Gold;
His genuine, and leſſe guilty wealth t'explore,
Search not his bottom, but ſurvey his ſhore;
Ore which he kindly ſpreads his ſpacious wing,
And hatches plenty for th' enſuing Spring.
Nor then deſtroyes it with too fond a ſtay,
Like Mothers which their Infants overlay.
Nor with a ſuddain and impetuous wave,
Like profuſe Kings, reſumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations ſpoyle
The mowers hopes, nor mock the plowmans toyle:

But Godlike his unwearied Bounty flows;
First loves to do, then loves the Good he does.
Nor are his Bleſſings to his banks confin'd,
But free, and common, as the Sea or Wind;
When he to boaſt, or to diſperſe his ſtores
Full of the tributes of his gratefull ſhores,
Viſits the World, and in his flying towers
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;
Finds wealth where 'tis, beſtows it where it wants,
Cities in deſerts, woods in Cities plants.
So that to us no thing, no place is ſtrange,
While his fayre boſome is the worlds exchange.
O could I flow like thee, and make thy ſtreame
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet cleare, though Gentle, yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without ore-flowing full.
The Forreſt. Here Nature, whether more intent to pleaſe
Us, or her ſelfe, with ſtrange varieties,
(For things of wonder give no leſſe delight
To the wiſe Maker's, then beholder's ſight.

Though

Though theſe delights from ſeverall cauſes move,
For ſo our children, thus our friends we love)
Wiſely ſhe knew, the harmony of things,
As well as that of ſounds, from diſcords ſprings.
Such was the diſcord, which did firſt diſperſe
Forme, order, beauty through the Univerſe;
While dryneſſe moyſture, coldneſſe heat reſiſts,
All that we have, and that we are, ſubſiſts.
While the ſteepe horrid roughneſſe of the Wood
Strives with the gentle calmeneſſe of the flood.
Such huge extreames when Nature doth unite,
Wonder from thence reſults, from thence delight.
The ſtreame is ſo tranſparent, pure, and cleare,
That had the ſelfe-enamour'd youth gaz'd here, *Narciſſus.*
So fatally deceiv'd he had not been,
While he the bottome, not his face had ſeene.
But his proud head the ayery Mountaine hides
Among the Clouds; his ſhoulders, and his ſides
A ſhady mantle cloaths; his curled brows
Frowne on the Gentle ſtreame, which calmly flows,

While winds and ſtormes his lofty forhead beat:
The common fate of all that's high, or great.
Low at his foot a ſpacious plaine is plac't,
Between the mountaine and the ſtreame imbrac't:
Which ſhade and ſhelter from the Hill derives,
While the kind river wealth and beauty gives;
And in the mixture of all theſe appeares
Variety, which all the reſt indears.
This ſcene had ſome bold Greek, or Brittiſh Bard
Beheld of old, what ſtories had we heard,
Of Faries, Satyrs, and the Nymphs their Dames,
Their feaſts, their revells, and their amorous flames!
'Tis ſtill the ſame, although their ayery ſhape
All but a quick Poetick ſight eſcape.
There Faunus and Sylvanus keepe their Courts,
And thither all the horned hoaſt reſorts,
To graze the rancker meade, that noble heard,
On whoſe ſublime and ſhady fronts is reard
Natures great Maſterpeece; to ſhew how ſoone
Great things are made, but ſooner are undone.

Here

Here have I ſeene the King, when great affaires
Give leave to ſlacken, and unbend his cares,
Attended to the Chaſe by all the flower
Of youth, whoſe hopes a Nobler prey devoure:
Pleaſure with Praiſe, and danger, they would buy,
And wiſh a foe that would not only fly.
The ſtagg now conſcious of his fatall Growth,
At once indulgent to his feare and ſloth,
To ſome darke covert his retreat had made,
Where nor mans eye, nor heavens ſhould invade
His ſoft repoſe; when th' unexpected ſound
Of doggs, and men, his wakefull eare doth wound.
Rouz'd with the noyſe, he ſcarſe believes his eare,
Willing to think th' illuſions of his feare
Had given this falſe Alar'm, but ſtraight his view
Confirmes, that more than all he feares is true.
Betray'd in all his ſtrengths, the wood beſet,
All inſtruments, all Arts of ruine met;
He calls to mind his ſtrength, and then his ſpeed,
His winged heeles, and then his armed head:

With

With theſe t'avoyd, with that his Fate to meet:
But feare prevails, and bids him truſt his feet.
So faſt he flyes, that his reviewing eye
Has loſt the chaſers, and his eare the cry;
Exulting, till he finds, their Nobler ſenſe
Their diſproportion'd ſpeed does recompenſe.
Then curſes his conſpiring feet, whoſe ſcent
Betrayes that ſafety which their ſwiftneſſe lent.
Then tryes his friends, among the baſer heard,
Where he ſo lately was obey'd, and fear'd,
His ſafety ſeeks: the heard, unkindly wiſe,
Or chaſes him from thence, or from him flyes.
Like a declining Stateſman, left forlorne
To his friends pitty, and purſuers ſcorne,
With ſhame remembers, while himſefe was one
Of the ſame heard, himſelfe the ſame had done.
Thence to the coverts, and the conſcious Groves,
The ſcenes of his paſt triumphs, and his loves;
Sadly ſurveying where he rang'd alone
Prince of the ſoyle, and all the heard his owne;

And

And like a bold Knight Errant did proclaime
Combat to all, and bore away the Dame;
And taught the woods to eccho to the ſtreame
His dreadfull challenge, and his claſhing beame.
Yet faintly now declines the fatall ſtrife;
So much his love was dearer then his life.
Now every leafe, and every moving breath
Preſents a foe, and every foe a death.
Wearied, forſaken, and purſu'd, at laſt
All ſafety in deſpaire of ſafety plac'd,
Courage he thence reſumes, reſolv'd to beare
All their aſſaults, ſince 'tis in vaine to feare.
And now too late he wiſhes for the fight
That ſtrength he waſted in Ignoble flight:
But when he ſees the eager chaſe renew'd,
Himſelfe by doggs, the doggs by men purſu'd:
He ſtraight revokes his bold reſolve, and more
Repents his courage, then his feare before;
Finds that uncertaine waies unſafeſt are,
And Doubt a greater miſchiefe then Deſpaire.

Then

Then to the ſtreame, when neither friends, norforce,
Nor ſpeed, nor Art availe, he ſhapes his courſe;
Thinks not their rage ſo deſperate t' aſſay,
An Element more mercileſſe then they.
But feareleſs they purſue, nor can the flood
Quench their dire thirſt; alas, they thirſt for blood.
So towards a Ship the oarefin'd Gallyes ply,
Which wanting Sea to ride, or wind to fly,
Stands but to fall reveng'd on thoſe that dare
Tempt the laſt fury of extreame deſpayre.
So fares the Stagg among th' inraged hounds,
Repells their force, and wounds returns for wounds.
And as a Hero, whom his baſer foes
In troops ſurround, now theſe aſſailes, now thoſe,
Though prodigall of life, diſdaines to dy
By common hands; but if he can deſcry
Some nobler foes approach, to him he calls,
And beggs his Fate, and then contented falls.
So when the King a mortall ſhaft lets fly
From his unerring hand, then glad to dy,

Proud

Proud of the wound, to it reſigns his blood,
And ſtaines the Chyrſtall with a Purple flood.
This a more Innocent, and happy chaſe,
Then when of old, but in the ſelfe-ſame place,
Faire liberty purſu'd, and meant a Prey
To lawleſs power, here turn'd, and ſtood at bay.
When in that remedy all hope was plac't
Which was, or ſhould have been at leaſt, the laſt.
Here was that Charter ſeal'd, wherein the Crowne
All markes of Arbitrary power layes downe:
Tyrant and ſlave, thoſe names of hate and feare,
The happier ſtile of King and Subject beare:
Happy, when both to the ſame Center move,
When Kings give liberty, and Subjects love.
Therefore not long in force this Charter ſtood;
Wanting that ſeale, it muſt be ſeal'd in blood.
The Subjects arm'd, the more their Princes gave,
Th' advantage only took, more to crave:
Till Kings by giving, give themſelves away,
And even that power, that ſhould deny, betray.

Runny Mead where the great Charte was firſt ſealed.

Magna Charta.

"Who gives conſtrain'd, but his owne feare reviles,
"Not thank't, but ſcorn'd; nor are they gifts, but ſpoyles.
Thus Kings, by graſping more then they could, hold
Firſt made their Subjects by oppreſſion bold:
And popular ſway, by forcing Kings to give
More then was fit for ſubjects to receive,
Ran to the ſame extreames and one exceſſe,
Made both, by ſtriving to be greater, leſſe.
When a calme River rais'd with ſudden raines,
Or Snowes diſſolv'd, o're flowes th'adjoyning Plaines,
The Husbandmen with high-rais'd banks ſecure
Their greedy hopes, and this he can endure.
But if with bayes, and Dammes they ſtrive to force,
His channell to a new, or narrow courſe;
No longer then within his banks he dwels,
Firſt to a Torrent, then a Deluge ſwels:
Stronger, and fiercer by reſtraint he roares,
And knows no bound, but makes his power his ſhores.

FINIS.